

## Governor McDonnell Announces Public-Private Partnership to Protect Mount Defiance at the Heart of Middleburg Battlefield

*– Partnership between Commonwealth of Virginia, Civil War Trust and Northern Virginia Regional Parks Authority to Preserve Unique Cavalry Battlefield –*

**--Mount Defiance Preservation Ceremony, May 9, 2012--**

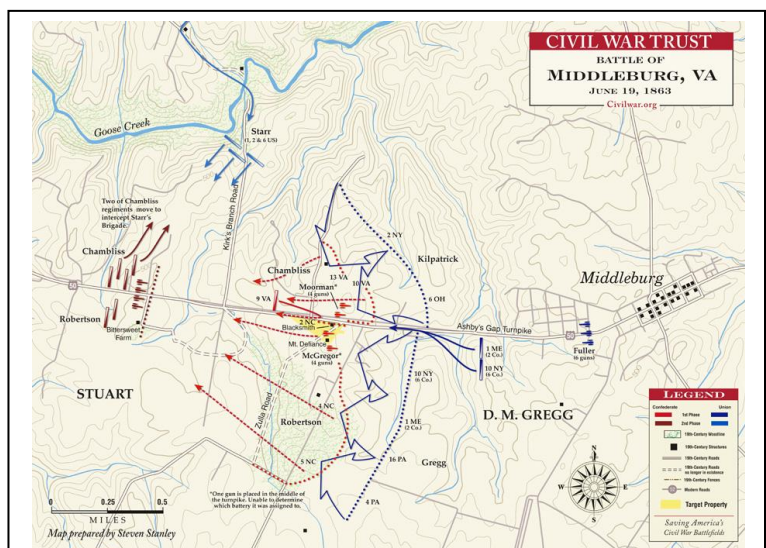
During a ceremony Wednesday, May 9, at the National Sporting Library and Museum in Middleburg, Gov. Bob McDonnell announced that the Commonwealth of Virginia will provide a \$432,000 Transportation Enhancement grant to assist in the permanent protection of the Mount Defiance property, a five-acre battle site at the heart of the Civil War Middleburg battlefield.

The interconnected battles of Aldie, Middleburg, and Upperville were largely cavalry engagements between opposing forces under Confederate General J.E.B. Stuart and Union General D. M. Gregg. The battles resulted from Union efforts to pierce Confederate cavalry to determine the extent and movements of Robert E. Lee's army in the Shenandoah Valley, as Lee was in pursuit of his plan to invade the North -- ultimately resulting in the Battle of Gettysburg.

The Mount Defiance property rests along present-day Route 50, an important transportation artery connecting Winchester and Alexandria. Controlling it was crucial to both the Union and Confederate armies during the war and the Gettysburg campaign. From June 17 through 19, 1863, opposing cavalry clashed along the roadway, as the two armies struggled for control of Middleburg and the Loudoun Valley.



National Sporting Library and Museum, Middleburg.



See map of battle here:

<http://www.civilwar.org/battlefields/middleburg/middleburg-maps/middleburg-map.html>

Today, the landscape at Mount Defiance is largely undisturbed, and clearly visible is the high ground that Confederate horse artillery defended. The site includes three buildings dating to before the Civil War: an antebellum manor house-turned-tavern, a blacksmith's cottage and the small blacksmith's shop where well-documented hand-to-hand combat occurred during the June 19 fighting.

The Transportation Enhancement grant will leave the Civil War Trust to finance the remainder of the \$540,000 purchase price from other public and private sector sources. Once fundraising is completed, the Civil War Trust will place a permanent conservation easement on the property with the Department of Historic Resources.

Ultimately, CWT will transfer the Mount Defiance property to the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority, which maintains nearly three dozen individual park properties totaling more than 10,000 acres across Arlington, Fairfax and Loudoun counties, as well as the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, and Falls Church. Among those holdings is the popular Balls Bluff Battlefield Regional Park and nearby Mt. Zion Historic Park and Aldie Mill Historic Park.

DHR Director Kathleen S. Kilpatrick was the master of ceremonies during the event and the speakers included, in addition to Gov. McDonnell and Director Kilpatrick, Secretary of Natural Resources Doug Domenech, Civil War Trust president James Lighthizer, and Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority executive director Paul Gilbert.

These are photos from the ceremony and the post-ceremony tour of the battlefield, led by historians Clark "Bud" Hall and Childs Burden.

A video of Mr. Burden describing the action at Mount Defiance is available at the Civil War Trust website: <http://www.civilwar.org/video/battle-of-middleburg.html>.



DHR Director Kilpatrick, Gov. McDonnell, and Sheila Johnson, co-founder and former owner of BET.



Director Kilpatrick introduces Secretary Domenech to a packed house.



Six more photos below:



Gov. McDonnell, Sec. Domenech, and Director Kilpatrick.



Gov. McDonnell and Director Kilpatrick present the "check" to CWT's Jim Lighthizer.



Because artillery played such a significant role in the Battle of Middleburg, two cannon were fired to give a demonstration of their concussive power. Sec. Domenech and DHR Director Kilpatrick stand facing the crowd to the left of the cannon.



What's a Civil War ceremony without re-enactors?



Historians Bud Hall (left, in hat and light jacket) and Childs Burden (right, blue jacket) describe the action of the battle. The blacksmith's cottage is pictured in the background. Just down the slope from where tour participants are gathered is a Civil War-era road trace.



Mount Defiance tour participants pass in front of the blacksmith cottage.